

Digital Photos Expected to Assist Domestic Violence Cases

All too often, domestic violence cases are difficult to prosecute. It may be that some victims shy away from cooperating once the case reaches court, or because the only evidence is a Polaroid photograph that is blurry and fails to clearly depict injuries. In addition, Polaroid photographs may take several weeks to reach the courts.

In an attempt to streamline evidence collection and distribution to the court, the New York City Police Department is beginning to utilize digital photography to capture images of injured victims.

Police at the scene are taking digital photographs of swollen eyes, bruised cheeks, and handprints on the victim's body, and then transmitting the images via e-mail to prosecutors and judges.



In this manner, the judge has evidence available at the perpetrator's arraignment, and the judge may consider the evidence prior to granting bail or issuing an Order of Protection to the victim.

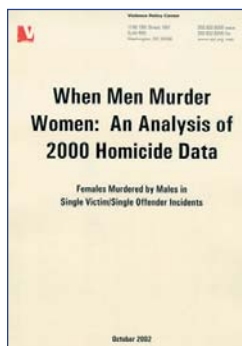
Use of digital photographs in New York is likely to have a significant impact, as the New York City Police Department handles approximately 90,000 domestic violence cases each year. In Queens, where police first began using digital photography about a year ago, prosecutors say that domestic violence case dismissals

dropped and convictions increased significantly. In fact, during the first six months of using this technology, convictions rose from 52 percent to 61 percent.

There are some detractors to the use of this technology in domestic violence cases. Agencies such as the Legal Aid Society are concerned that digital photos may be manipulated on a computer, and advise the courts to use the evidence with caution. Other critics are concerned that concrete evidence such as digital photos may discourage some victims from seeking help. On the contrary, Rita Asen, director of the Queens Criminal and Supreme Court counseling program, suggests the new technology "has been really beneficial in terms of letting the victim see herself," and that the court believes "this makes victims more willing to go ahead and cooperate."

New York City is the first large city to utilize digital photography throughout the police department. Smaller cities such as Boulder, Colorado, and Largo, Florida, are also using the technology, but it is expected that New York's use of digital photos will encourage other larger jurisdictions to follow suit.

Arizona's Rate of Females Killed by Males 2nd Highest in Nation



In early October, the *Arizona Republic* reported that a Violence Policy Center report demonstrates that Arizona ranks second in the nation for the rate of females killed by males. Using data from 2000, researchers showed that Arizona's 58 homicides of females killed by males translates into a rate of 2.26 per 100,000. The report also details the age, race, victim/offender relationship, and most common weapons used in the Arizona homicides. The complete Violence Policy Center report may be found at <http://www.vpc.org/studies/dv5cont.htm>.

Inside

From the Chair

Update on Initiatives

Upcoming Events

From the Chair



Peggy Bilsten, Chair
City of Phoenix Council member

As we continue to embrace the new year, it is a good time to reflect on all that the community has accomplished with regard to domestic violence prevention, education, and services.

Although much work remains to be done, it is important to recall that under the leadership and dedication of community members such as those on the Regional Domestic Violence Council, many gaps have been assessed and solutions have been targeted. Specifically, several of the regional domestic violence initiatives identified in the original 1999 Regional Domestic Violence Plan have been accomplished or are currently being implemented. Many of these accomplishments are reported in the 2002 Regional Domestic Violence Plan Update.

The Employers Against Domestic Violence (EADV) group, for instance, has increased its membership from 50 to 70 members since 2002. EADV also hosted four training sessions for employers in 2002, and continues to plan a full schedule of training in 2003. Further, the EADV's plans for the April 26, 2003, 1st Annual Walk to End Domestic Violence are progressing rapidly, and the community's excitement continues to build as additional corporate partners join in the effort. Such activities to unite the business community in domestic violence planning efforts are discussed in the Regional Domestic Violence Plan.

In addition, leaders in our health care community continue to design, distribute, and train other health care providers to screen patients for domestic violence. This ground breaking project will certainly turn heads in 2003 as it is rolled out at 4 local hospital systems. These health care endeavors are outlined in the Regional Domestic Violence Plan.

As you can see, the domestic violence community's time and energy is making a local impact, but our leadership is required to continue these successful drives. It is with this in mind that I envision the discussions, projects, and community efforts that 2003 will bring us, and I welcome your continued interest and participation.

Best regards,

Councilwoman Peggy Bilsten
Chair, Regional Domestic Violence Council

MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council

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Update on Council Initiatives

STOP Grant Funding

In October, MAG was awarded a STOP grant from the Governor's Division for the Prevention of Family Violence. These funds will be used to support continued staffing of the domestic violence initiative.

The scope of work for the 18-month grant includes working on engaging local governments in assessing their delivery systems, through safety and accountability audits, to ensure that victims remain as safe as possible once they report a domestic violence dispute and the offenders are held accountable. Also, a key priority of the Council over the next year is addressing the effects of domestic violence in children.

Walk to End Domestic Violence

The first annual Walk to End Domestic Violence is scheduled for Saturday, April 26, at 8:00 a.m. The 5K walk and run course will take participants around the State Capitol, and will



finish at the Capitol Mall, where domestic violence shelters and other

service providers will provide educational materials.

The Walk's title sponsors are *The Arizona Republic* and 12 News. Presenting sponsors include Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, APS, Bank One, and Verizon Wireless. The sponsors' generous financial and in-kind donations will allow the Walk to cover its costs, and raise funds from entry fees and pledge collections. Funds raised from the Walk will be distributed through a request for proposals process to local domestic violence shelters.

Publicity and registration for the Walk will begin shortly, and more than 6,000 participants are expected. For additional information, please contact Carolyn McBurney at (602) 254-6300. 📞

Employers Against Domestic Violence (EADV)

Training, Awareness, and Membership

EADV's Training, Awareness, and Membership Committee hosted the November 15th "Workplace Violence Prevention and Preparedness Training" for supervisors and managers. Facilitated by Doreen Nicholas of the Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the forum provided training and resources to 45 participants. Feedback from the forum was overwhelmingly positive, and 17 new businesses joined EADV as a result of the forum.



Employers
Against
Domestic
Violence

The next training program is scheduled for Tuesday, March 4, at 7:30 a.m., and will focus on the state of domestic violence prevention, education, and legislation in Arizona. The location and speaker names will be released shortly. In the meantime, feel free to call MAG staff at (602) 254-6300 with any questions.

Outreach

EADV's Outreach Committee is beginning to roll out its much-anticipated "Resource Network." This project is intended to provide an avenue through which businesses of all sizes can donate in-kind products and services to help meet the daily operational needs of shelters. In partnership with Community Cares Connections, the Resource Network is soliciting such donations from EADV members and non-member businesses, and will facilitate the receipt of these services or products by local domestic violence shelters. For example, local shelters have identified printing services as being in high demand, and therefore the Resource Network is searching for local businesses that are able to donate printing services or materials to the shelters.

Informational letters have been sent to EADV members and other businesses. In the meantime, if you have any questions, or if you are interested in assisting the Resource Network or its recipient shelters, please contact DeAnna Smothers at (480) 785-8889. 📞

Upcoming Events

March 4 Employers Against Domestic Violence State of Domestic Violence in Arizona

Phoenix, AZ

7:30 a.m.

Visit www.mag.maricopa.gov or call (602) 254-6300

March 30-April 2 Forging Partnerships: Substance Abuse, Mental Health, and Domestic Violence

Scottsdale, AZ

Visit www.azcadv.org or call (602) 369-7792

April 23-25 International Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence and Stalking Conference

San Diego, CA

Call (602) 254-6300 or

Visit www.MYSATI.com or call (858) 679-2913

April 26 Walk to End Domestic Violence

Phoenix, AZ

8:00 a.m.


Carolyn McBurney (602) 254-6300

2002 Regional Domestic Violence Plan Update Available!

After discussing and working to implement the 41 recommendations issued in the original 1999 Regional Domestic Violence Plan, MAG staff has updated the Plan to detail accomplishments and various community activities. The final version of the 2002 Plan is available on MAG's web site at <http://www.mag.maricopa.gov/detail.cms?item=1732>, or by calling (602) 254-6300. The MAG staff greatly appreciates the assistance and feedback from the community on earlier versions of the Plan.

Governor's Division for Prevention of Family Violence

On October 15, the Governor's Division for Prevention of Family Violence released its *Fiscal Year 2002 Annual Report*. The Annual Report outlines the Division's efforts to increase domestic violence awareness, obtain and distribute federal funding, and collaborate with state agencies and communities.

The publication also details activities of the Governor's Commission for Prevention of Family Violence, including the Commission's Policy Board, Technical Board, and several subcommittees. The *Annual Report* is available by calling (602) 542-1773. 



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